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NSC BRIEFING

11 March 1954

INDOCHINA

- I. Viet Minh getting the jump on French in demonstrating military initiative prior Geneva.
- II. Enemy greatly accelerated activity in Tonkin delta in past week.
 - A. 10 transport aircraft, mostly C-47's, were sabotaged at Hanoi.
 - B. At Haiphong, 4 B-26's and 6 ~~F-84's~~ ^{*Liaison a/c*} destroyed or damaged.
 - C. Sizable raids on French posts around Hanoi and Haiphong have also taken place.
 - D. Mine warfare assuming serious proportions; 80% recent officer losses caused by mines.
- III. Most of the 308th Division now withdrawn from Laos to Dien Bien Phu and an attack there again a possibility.
 - A. Enemy total after 15 March at this point will be about 28 Bns; French will be 15.
 - B. Capture Dien Bien Phu would be dramatic coup before Geneva. But US army attaché believes post can hold.
 - C. Viet Minh could continue heavy threat to garrison, thus immobilizing large body French troops and further delaying Navarre plan.

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IV. Viet Minh maneuvers elsewhere contribute to dispersal French strength.

- A. In central Laos, enemy movement southward threatens posts in south Laos and even Cambodia.
- B. In Annam, activity increasing in Pleiku region.
- C. US army attaché says great increase in desertions and posts lost in South Vietnam during past week clearly indicate deteriorating situation there.